/211 cont./

262 Kumiss -- mare's milk fermented with spirits -- should be
272 acknowledged as the chief food of the Kirghiz /Kazak/. A special
[252] bag of smoked leather, called "tursuk," is used for the preparation
[415] and storing of kumiss. A wooden /212/ /illustration appears here/ stirrer is used to stir the kumiss while it is being prepared, and each time before it is used. The best kumiss is found among the Kirghiz /Kazak/ of the southern Altai and the Kokchetav uyezd, as they

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Winter quarters (kstau) of a well-to-do Kirghiz /Kazak/ in a wooded locality (yard, the buildings around it, and the house).

262 have the best pasture facilities for their livestock. In summer most
[272] of the Kirghiz /Kazak/ live primarily on kumiss, drinking great quantities of it. Other milk products consumed include "airan" -- sour cow's milk -- and various kinds of cheese, including "kurt," a roasted sheep's-milk cheese with small curds, "yeremchik," a sour cow's-milk cheese, and others. Meat is eaten primarily in winter, and most often mutton and lamb, because it is cheaper. Horsemeat appears only in
[252] exceptional cases, as a delicacy. Meat is almost always boiled (in the kazan) and only rarely roasted. First the meat is eaten (with the
[264] hands) and then the fat, "surpa," is drunk from large wooden cups. Smoked meat is also eaten. Wild game and fish are rarely eaten, and vegetables are likewise uncommon.

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Omsk Kirghiz /Kazak/. A Kirghiz /Kazak/ woman milking a mare. (From a photograph by Bebenin.)

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252 Millet is the most widespread of the grain foods and is eaten either somewhat browned (and then eaten directly) or in the form of kasha. "Baursaki," an unleavened dough, is made with flour, cut into small pieces, and fried in sheep fat (it tastes like the Mardi-Gras nuts of the Russians). "Balamyk" is a watery dish made of flour, millet fried in fat and water, and cooked in the kazan. "Kaurdak" is pieces of roasted meat from various parts of an animal, of which the kidneys are considered especially tasty. As a sign of special attention and graciousness to a guest, the host himself puts pieces of kaurdak into the guest's mouth (1). This is called eating "bish'-barman"

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1. Apparently the Russian word "kavardak" /mishmash/ comes from this.

262 (five fingers). Kumiss, baursaki, and kaurdak make up the main food of the Kirghiz /Kazak/ and their favorite food, especially kumiss, which is at the same time considered just as sacred as bread is among the peasants. One can judge how much the Kirghiz /Kazak/ love kumiss by the fact that there is retail selling of kumiss, as of vodka among Russians (the so-called

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